



# PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose sharply from 8.2 percent in November to 9.0 percent in December as the U.S. recession continued to take a toll. Panhandle manufacturers and wholesale businesses continued to cut jobs while retail businesses, which normally add jobs in December, also cut jobs. The December job losses followed two months of exceptionally large losses in most industrial sectors. Initial unemployment insurance claims in the fourth quarter of 2001 rose to 8,057—41.5 percent higher than the 5,695 initial claims in the fourth quarter of 2000.

Despite the recession, several positive developments occurred in recent months as described in the Area Developments below.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bonner County

- Coldwater Creek, the Sandpoint-based catalog company, announced it would permanently lay off 150 workers in the Sandpoint area by the end of March. Coldwater will close its distribution center in Kootenai where it employs 120 workers. In the future, all merchandise will be shipped from Coldwater Creek's distribution center in West Virginia, which opened in 1999. Coldwater also will cut 20 positions at its corporate headquarters and 10 positions from its retail store on Cedar Street Bridge in downtown Sandpoint. After the layoffs, Coldwater will employ 371 people in the Sandpoint area, remaining the area's largest private employer. Coldwater continues to employ more than 300 people at its call center in Coeur d'Alene.
- Cascade Toboggan and Rescue Equipment Co. is moving from Snoqualmie, Washington, to Sandpoint

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	Dec 2001*	Nov 2001	Dec 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	92,020	90,630	89,700	1.5	2.6
Unemployed	8,320	7,400	7,510	12.4	10.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.0	8.2	8.4		
Total Employment	83,700	83,230	82,190	0.6	1.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	92,420	90,920	89,970	1.6	2.7
Unemployed	9,050	6,810	8,110	32.9	11.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.8	7.5	9.0		
Total Employment	83,370	84,110	81,860	-0.9	1.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	66,600	67,130	66,790	-0.8	-0.3
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	13,450	13,740	14,490	-2.1	-7.2
Mining	570	600	1,010	-5.0	-43.6
Construction	4,540	4,650	4,750	-2.4	-4.4
Manufacturing	8,340	8,490	8,730	-1.8	-4.5
Lumber & Wood Products	4,090	4,180	4,080	-2.2	0.2
All Other Manufacturing	4,250	4,310	4,650	-1.4	-8.6
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	53,150	53,390	52,300	-0.4	1.6
Transportation	1,510	1,510	1,500	0.0	0.7
Communication & Utilities	1,060	1,060	1,090	0.0	-2.8
Wholesale Trade	2,100	2,140	2,290	-1.9	-8.3
Retail Trade	14,630	14,930	15,160	-2.0	-3.5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,660	2,690	2,450	-1.1	8.6
Service & Miscellaneous	16,820	16,500	15,750	1.9	6.8
Government Administration	8,850	9,010	8,550	-1.8	3.5
Government Education	5,520	5,550	5,510	-0.5	0.2

\* Preliminary estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

in March. Forty-year-old Cascade, which makes rescue toboggans used by ski patrols to haul injured people, will bring four to six new jobs to its new location at 1808 Industrial Way. Cascade expects to employ up to 15 employees in about three years. It's the first successful recruitment of a business by Bonner County Economic Development Corp. (BCEDC), created in 2000. BCEDC targets outdoor equipment makers using the Sandpoint area's spectacular scenery, attractive lifestyle, and available workforce as draws.

- Bonner County's other major economic development organization, the Priest River Development Corporation (PRDC), recently was awarded stewardship of the Lakeface Lamb Creek project by the U.S. Forest Service. The seven-year project includes harvesting timber, removing weeds, replacing stream culverts, maintaining some roads, removing other roads, installing interpretative signs, and thinning and pruning trees to maintain the beauty of and reduce fire danger on the 7,200-acre area on the west side of Priest Lake. The PRDC's stewardship should make the area safer for continued residential and commercial

development. Currently the area is home to up to 300 year-around residents and 1,300 seasonal residents. The PRDC says the project will create \$1.75 million in products and jobs.

- Among Sandpoint's newest businesses are: Windermere Real Estate's new office in the White Pine Lodge at Schweitzer; Idaho Veterinary Service, opened by veterinarian Marilyn Moyle at 109 Shingle Mill Road; and Couch Potato Upholstery, offering residential, commercial, and marine upholstery at 1424-A North Boyer.

### **Kootenai County**

- Wal-Mart opened its 184,400-square-foot supercenter in Post Falls in January. The 24-hour discount and grocery store employs 340 people. The supercenter also includes a Radio Grill restaurant, TCBY yogurt outlet, pharmacy, vision center, portrait studio, one-hour photo processing, hair salon, tire and lube center, and pretzel maker. Next to Wal-Mart, at 2956 Mullan Avenue, Tesoro Petroleum opened a Mirastar gas station.
- Wal-Mart's plan for a Coeur d'Alene 220,000-square-foot supercenter currently is on hold. Wal-Mart originally announced it would start construction in the summer of 2001. Now, it is waiting for the results of a traffic study on U.S. Highway 95, which may affect customer access to the store slated to be located at the intersection of Highway 95 and Aqua Avenue.
- A \$1 million strip mall soon will be under construction near the Post Falls Wal-Mart. The 21,600-square-foot retail center at 740 North Cecil Road should be completed in June.
- Center Partners began 2002 with the opening of its new 28,700-square-foot call center at Riverbend Commerce Park in Post Falls. The new call center employs 280 people. Another 800 people work at Center Partner's call center on Ironwood Drive in Coeur d'Alene. Center Partners expects to hire another 80 people at Post Falls in the near future.
- Oxyfresh Worldwide, a multi-level marketing company, relocated its corporate headquarters from Spokane to Riverstone Business Park in Coeur d'Alene. The 17-year-old company sells vitamins, toothpaste, shampoo, and personal care items. Its corporate headquarters employs about 50 people. Oxyfresh, which was recruited by Kootenai County's Jobs Plus, expects to hire 10 more people by July.
- Walgreens plans to open a retail pharmacy store in a 14,000-square-foot building to be built at North Idaho's busiest intersection, the corner of Appleway and U.S. Highway 95 in Coeur d'Alene. When construction is completed in late summer, Walgreens will hire 150 people.

- Uni Key Health will move from Bozeman, Montana, to Hayden Lake in April. Uni Key sells nutritional supplements and other natural health products via the Internet, direct mail, and phone calling. When Uni Key moves into a 4,000-square-foot building currently under construction at 181 West Commerce in Hayden, it will hire nine people.
- Rathdrum's newest business is Curves for Women, a fitness and weight loss center at 662 Commercial Park Avenue.
- Hayden recently welcomed these new businesses: The Red Lizard Gifts Etc., a gift store featuring antiques, candles, jewelry, toys, and cards at 228 Miles Avenue; Monster Hobbies, a hobby shop selling radio-controlled airplanes, boats, cars, and plastic models, at 9551 Highway 95; and Red Oak Clothing, a 10,000-square-foot store selling outdoor clothing on Hayden Avenue.
- New businesses in Post Falls include Easyriders Road House, a motorcycle dealership at 1640 East Schneidmiller; Career Search International, an executive recruitment office at 1810 Schneidmiller; and Time for Tots, a child care center at 2544 East Ferry Landing.
- Coeur d'Alene recently welcomed these new businesses: Twelve Ten Tavern, a bar at 1206 Sherman Avenue; Hollywood Shades, selling sunglasses, jewelry, watches, and Hollywood memorabilia at 211 Sherman Avenue; Blondie's on the Boulevard, a deli at 1527 Northwest Boulevard; Country Fair Market, selling meat, cheese, and ready-to-eat meals, at 6055 Government Way; a Flaming Wok fast food outlet serving Chinese food at the Silver Lake Mall; Coeur d'Alene Coffee & Gifts in the Sherman Mall at 412 Sherman Avenue; Signs R Us, making signs, banners, and logos at 2924 North Government Way; and Big Dad e-Café, a cybercafé at 213 Sherman Avenue.

### **Shoshone County**

- In January, the Lucky Friday Mine near Mullan recalled 20 of the 140 workers it laid off in November. The Lucky Friday now has a total staff of 62.
- This winter, James Castro opened Sled Dog Adventures, offering dog sled rides near the base of Lookout Pass Ski Area close to the Idaho-Montana border.
- The Wallace Super-Stop, a gas and convenience store just off the freeway in Wallace, recently reopened after being closed for more than a year.

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